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devoted to an explanation of the causes which produced the dismemberment of the British empire. But is it *now* a question for disputation, whether the transplanting of Englishmen to America has occasioned more evil than good? Our fathers were but British colonists, and as such might rightfully claim immunities and exemptions to which we, the members of an independent nation, are not entitled. Two generations have elapsed since we commenced the experiment of self-government. In developing our resources, and in increasing our wealth, we have done more than any nation of modern times. Our territory is vastly more than sufficient for the subsistence of those who now inhabit it, but is still deemed by many quite too small to meet our future growth. If, then, we have made, and are making, no progress in virtue, the fault is all our own, and the consequences of it will be upon our heads and upon those of our children.

ART. IX. — *Reports of the Annual Visiting Committees of the Public Schools of the City of Boston.* 1847. Boston : J. H. Eastburn, City Printer. pp. 123 and 91.

THE idea of popular education may be said to lie at the basis of the free institutions of New England. Amidst all the changes in public and private affairs, through the calm of peace and the storms of war, this idea has never been lost sight of, as one, to carry out which into complete practical results constant efforts must be made. We have, however, fallen far short of the perfect attainment of this end, — nay, of what a people so earnestly bent on the fulfilment of this high purpose might reasonably have been expected to reach.

Of late years, however, public attention has been thoroughly roused to the importance of doing more to forward the magnificent conception of educating the people. The labors of Mr. Horace Mann, who left the profession of the law, the highest honors of which his abilities and the estimation they were held in by the public justified him in aspiring to, in order that he might consecrate his energies and his time to the holy cause of popular education, have so set the machinery of progress in

motion, that there seems but little danger of pause or hesitation in carrying on the work.} His untiring services since he assumed the office of Secretary to the Board of Education will immortalize his name as one of the great benefactors of the present age. With an industry to which a parallel can scarcely be found, he has collected facts from every quarter ; travelled from town to town, county to county, State to State ; organized institutes, delivered lectures, examined school-houses, done every thing which bore directly or indirectly upon the accomplishment of his mighty work. Everywhere, his zeal, his ardor, his eloquence, have encouraged the hopeful, roused the indifferent, strengthened the friends and borne down the enemies of education.† At times, the feeble voice of the bigot, born out of time in this age of light, and blinking like an owl suddenly roused from his darkling corner by the breaking in of the mid-day beam, has been heard to make a shrill outcry, and to call for a return of his congenial darkness. In vain ! The reign of bigotry is over. Science, letters, arts, inventions, the schemes of philanthropy, the practical application of the great truths of Christianity to the conditions and duties of daily life, — these august and absorbing interests of the present day make men slow to listen to the voice of the mediæval croaker, who fancies that by reviving the old, worn-out theological odium, he can scare the human mind back into its ancient courses.

In Boston, the standard of education has always been comparatively high. In a wealthy city, animated by a liberal and patriotic spirit, this was no more than satisfying a just expectation. Many schools, however, in the larger towns of the Commonwealth, have disputed the palm of excellence with the public schools of Boston. A generous rivalry in this respect may lead to infinite good, and ought to be encouraged by every lawful means. City and country will be alike improved by the noble strife. In some respects the city schools have advantages over those of the country. The city is the centre of intelligence, as well as of wealth. Ideas, no less than money, circulate with greater rapidity there. Books are more abundant and accessible, and the mental powers are more speedily brought into activity. Talent of all kinds naturally concentrates in the city. Professional, literary, commercial eminence gravitates towards the city, as its centre of attraction. But on the other hand, the activity of

city intellect is apt to be superficial and showy, just as a young man accustomed to society in the capital may, with ordinary capacities and shallow acquirements, outshine in conversation and on all common occasions the studious youth of loftier abilities, to whom these external advantages have been denied. This tendency of city life, which runs from the highest down to the lowest classes, must be resisted by the instructor with uncompromising sternness.

There is another disadvantage under which the cause of education labors in the city, that does not exist, to the same extent at least, in the country. This is to be found in the comparative social position of the teacher. In the society of a respectable country town, the able teacher is known and "honored of all men." In point of income, he stands on a level, or nearly so, with the leading men of the place, and is able to live with at least the average elegance of his neighbours. With a few favored exceptions, this is not so in a city. We are speaking now, be it remembered, of the teachers in the public grammar and writing schools. There are, in all our large cities, private instructors who have incomes equal to those of the first class of professional men ; — some even who have accumulated fortunes. And surely no men in any community better deserve success, if desert is to be measured by services rendered to the community. But let us take the salaries paid to the masters of the Boston public schools, and compare them with the incomes of men in business or in the so-called professions. The salaries of ushers and sub-masters may be put aside from the present question, because we presume those places are not generally regarded as permanent. It is a reasonable view to take, that men, who are intrusted with an interest so vitally important as the education of the young, should be placed at ease in their pecuniary circumstances, so that the whole energies of their minds may be devoted to their work. Their salaries should be sufficiently ample to enable them to live with a modest elegance and hospitality, not very far below the average style of the society in which they are placed. They should also be able to lay up something against the hour of sickness, to which all *may*, and the infirmities of age, to which all *must*, come. To do this, it is not necessary that the situations of teachers should be rendered highly lucrative. It may be presumed that the object of the teacher never is mere money-making,

and therein his career differs materially from that of the business man. Then, too, the regularity and certainty of his income are, to a limited extent, compensating circumstances for its smallness ; but it will not do to press this consideration too far. The question with the school authorities should not be, for how small a sum the instruction of youth can be procured ; but how large a sum will place the instructors on a respectable footing in their worldly circumstances, and enable them to meet the exigencies above enumerated.

The tendency in all business communities is to economize in the salaries of public teachers, while it is thought necessary to compensate with liberality the services which are connected with pecuniary and material interests. Large fees are paid to a distinguished lawyer, for a few moments' consultation, without a murmur. A confidential clerk receives a salary twice or three times as large as a professor of letters in the University, and at least as large as the most eminent professor of law. The actuary of a life insurance company is paid, for a few hours' work a day, four or five times the salary of a master who has six hundred future hopes of the republic under his charge all the weary hours from morning to evening. The cashier of a bank enjoys an income as large as is received by all the teachers in the most numerous public school. Now is the advice of a lawyer, or the service of a clerk, or the calculation of the actuary, or the money-changing of the cashier, so high a function as the training up of the rising generation of a great city to virtue and knowledge ? Judged by any rational standard, there can be but one answer to this question ; and it is a question of immense importance to the civic fathers who have it practically to decide.

Boston lays claim to the credit of great liberality in the matter of education ; to that credit she is, as compared with other cities, fully entitled. But how stands the case, if we apply to her conduct the principles indicated by the foregoing remarks ? Are the instructors in her public schools placed on such a footing, in respect to income, as the importance of their labors deserves ? We believe the answer to this question, which every right-minded man must give, will be an unhesitating No. With the exception of the head-masters of the Latin School and the English High School, whose salaries are barely respectable, the incomes of the public teachers are miserably inadequate. Are the public teachers able to take their

place in society, on a level of respectability with the average of what are called the liberal professions? We pretend to honor the work of the teacher, and to regard it as highly as that of the clergyman, the lawyer, and the physician; but let us ask, in all earnestness, whether our actions correspond with our pretences. How stands the fact? Can a gentleman, placed at the head of a public school, which occupies his time and thoughts, to the exclusion of all other business, meet the expenses of a family, share in the intercourse of refined society, and put by something against a rainy day, on a salary of fifteen hundred dollars a year, in the city of Boston? The question answers itself. A bachelor can doubtless do well enough upon that income anywhere. It is more even than he deserves. But teachers are not apt to remain bachelors, nor is it desirable that they should. A severe and painful economist, doubtless, by living in a miserable street, where rents are cheap, by denying himself and his family all amusement, by making his wife and daughters do all the servile work of the cook and the chambermaid, by abstaining from the purchase of books, by never entertaining friends at his house, — in short, by giving up all the embellishments and refining influences of life, — may thus contrive to keep soul and body together, though there can be very little in the partnership to make it mutually desirable; but it is perfectly plain that the condition of such a man, so far as his salary is concerned, is far below that of the master mechanic or the wholesale grocer.

The house-builder and the tenant of a stall in Quincy Market increase in wealth from year to year, and at length buy houses in Beacon street, furnish them with sumptuous Parisian luxury, open their doors to the fashionable world, and place within their children's reach every refinement of letters and art. This is all right. But where is the head of a public school all this time? Toiling on from year to year in an employment which, according even to Boston notions, is obscure, while common sense declares it to be most important. When Boston society is spoken of, no person dreams of including in the collective idea the masters and sub-masters of the much boasted public schools. When distinguished gentlemen from other cities or foreign countries visit Boston, and its elegant hospitalities are extended to them, no one dreams of asking the masters and sub-masters of the public school to share in the social rites by which the stranger is welcomed.

The traveller, who wishes to see the institutions for which Boston is famed, may be taken to the public school, and asked to admire the regularity, order, intelligence, and able management there displayed ; but he to whose talent, accomplishment, industry, skill, and tact these honorable boasts of the city are due, is scarcely thought of in the general claim for the credit which the public makes, and is allowed to assert. In the circle of the saloon, where the stranger is received in the evening, to the delights of cultivated conversation, and where the effect of the scene is heightened by the elegant arts, by the elaborate toilette, by entrancing music, and it may be by the science of the *cuisine* and the exhilaration of Champagne and the Rhine, does the stranger meet the masters and sub-masters of the Boston schools ? He will find there the lawyer, all forensic cases laid aside ; the clergyman, in black coat and white cravat ; the banker, forgetful of interest and discounts ; the merchant, respite from the anxieties of the cotton-market and the exchange ; the speculator, fresh from the purchase of stocks which support the Mexican war ; the clerk, dismounted from his three-legged stool, his ledger closed and locked up in the iron safe ; the spendthrift even, known to be a useless cumberer of the ground. But in this throng of varied characters who make up what is called preëminently the society of Boston, the master of the public school, who has spent the day in benefiting the moral and intellectual natures of six hundred Boston youth, is not to be found. It does not occur to society that such a man has a claim to their respect, sympathy, and hospitality, so far as these are shown by acting towards him as if he were one of themselves.

There are some who care nothing for society beyond that of their immediate family and most intimate friends. But the indulgence of this indifference is good neither for body nor mind *in any case* ; and the teacher needs the relaxation and exhilaration of society in a more especial manner than any other professional man. We say, then, that a community, which truly values the education of the mass of its children, ought to value the services of its public teachers enough to place them, in social estimation, and in the means of a modest elegance of life, not much below the average position of the liberal professions. As things are now, the condition of a public teacher is a depressing, exhausting, discouraging

one. There is little in it to make him feel the stimulus of hope for himself and for those who are nearest and dearest to him. The young, the able, and the ambitious see nothing attractive in the profession. They see the most faithful and zealous condemned to a life of pinching economy and obscurity. The spur of fame, which rewards distinguished exertion in other intellectual occupations, rarely touches the spirit of the teacher in a public school. The prospect of wealth he would be insane to take into the account. As a general rule, the young, the able, and the ambitious will therefore turn their thoughts to other and more brilliant careers. See what a vastly disproportionate share of the talent of this country is drawn into the profession of the law. Now it cannot be that the mass of details in legal practice is a whit more liberal or liberalizing than the details of a teacher's daily routine. But the legal profession stands high in the public estimation. It opens the path which leads to wealth, to honor, to the possibility of the highest honor which the country has to bestow. The reputation of a good lawyer opens the doors of the best society for his admission, and, what he will prize infinitely more than any advantage personal to himself, places his children within the reach of the most desirable associations that any community can furnish. We do not say that able men will not accept the place of public teacher in our city, even under all the discouragements of the profession. If we venture upon any such rash assertion, the admirable reports named at the head of this article would contradict us point-blank. The talent, skill, and accomplishments now employed in the public schools of Boston, and the success of the teachers' efforts under the discouragements of their situation and of some fundamental defects in the organization of the schools, are very surprising. But would not the glow of honor and prosperity which the able instructor merits make even these gentlemen feel a greater ardor in the pursuit of the objects of their profession, and devote themselves with even more enthusiasm to the duties of their noble calling?

In making the foregoing observations, we have had in our eye only the schools embraced in the reports. The Boston Latin School is an institution with which the higher education of the city is intimately connected. It has always been the brightest jewel in the crown of the city's honor. Every

year a large class of young men, the very *élite* of Boston, go forth from its friendly portals, to enter upon the studies of the neighbouring University. The exactness and thoroughness with which the classics have always been taught there, and especially under the present distinguished head and his able corps of associates, have been the chief reliance of the University and the other schools in their efforts to keep the standard of classical learning high. The salaries in this institution, though on a more liberal scale, bear no fair proportion to the talent and labor which the maintenance of the school at its present height of fame imperiously demands. And yet it is not many years since the city, in violation of an implied contract, and in a fit of niggardly and absurd economy, cut down the salaries of the heads of this and the English High School ; and though a return to common sense has put a stop to the injustice, yet the sum honestly due these gentlemen for arrears during the period of repudiating curtailment has not to this day been paid.

We have touched upon these considerations by way of introduction to a slight notice of the School Reports of 1847. Topics of this nature scarcely come within the range of a school committee, and it is not therefore surprising that they have received no attention. They force themselves, however, irresistibly upon the notice of one who looks upon the Boston schools from abroad, and who sees reason to sympathize with the peculiar hardships which a city schoolmaster is compelled to bear. To exhaust the subject, which we feel to be one of immense importance to the welfare of every American city, would far transcend our limits ; we must therefore content ourselves with these brief hints of a general nature, and now confine what we have further to say to the pamphlet before us.

At the head of the sub-committee that made the report on the Grammar Schools stands the name of George B. Emerson, — a gentleman identified with the intellectual progress of the city for nearly a quarter of a century. To speak of his merits as they deserve will belong, at some very remote day, we trust, to his biographer. But without trenching on the reserve proper on the present occasion, we may say, that his long experience, his profound acquaintance with the subject, and his searching intellect give an authoritative weight to his opinions on education. This report is distin-

guished for clearness of arrangement, and the intelligible manner in which the condition of the schools is described, the scrupulous and discriminating justice with which the labors of the several instructors are set forth, the care with which all the circumstances in the situation of the schools and the character of the scholars which ought to influence the judgment formed upon the teachers' course are explained, and, what is of more importance beyond the limits of the city, for the general reflections incidentally thrown in. The pamphlet consists of a general view of the appearance of the schools, which occupies the first eighteen pages ; then a particular account of each of twenty schools, as ascertained by oral examination, conducted for the most part by the members of the committee. This is followed by discussions of the following subjects : Moral Instruction, the System of two independent Heads in the Grammar Schools, Text-Books, Vagrant Children, and Intermediate Schools. The remainder of the document, from the sixty-fifth page to the end, is occupied by " tables of the questions proposed at the examination of the Grammar Schools, together with the character of the answers given to each question in the several schools."

To the friend of education, all these details are of the highest interest. It is due to the teachers of the Grammar Schools to say, that the general results, stated by the committee with perfect impartiality, are most honorable to their fidelity and talents. On the mode of examination, the committee make these impartial remarks :—

" In their first visits, the Committee endeavoured to ascertain, by personal questioning and inspection, the condition of the schools in respect to the instruction given and the progress made in reading, grammar, geography, and history ; the examination being, in all cases, and, with few exceptions, throughout, conducted by the Committee. They are aware that this mode of examination gives but a partial view of the condition of a school. *The oral examination, to be completely just and satisfactory, ought to be in part conducted by the Committee and in part by the teacher.* The point reached, the attainments made in each study, may be ascertained by a Committee, by means of questions put by themselves, while the teachers are looking on as spectators. But other points not less important, — *the language, the manner, and the spirit of the teacher, the intelligence, vivacity, and thoroughness of his teaching, and the mental habits*

formed in the learner by the process, can only be learnt by seeing and hearing the teacher conduct the examination of his own classes, uninterrupted and uninfluenced by the Committee. Both these modes, the Committee, in the four, or, at most, five hours spent in any one school, had not always an opportunity to adopt. It was only in certain schools that the readiness and rapidity of the answers of the children left the Committee time to witness the mode of instruction employed by the teacher.” — p. 7.

The remarks that follow, on reading, are judicious and excellent. To the truth of the plain and weighty considerations embraced in the passage we now quote every reflecting person must give his assent.

“ If history is to be taught at all, it is to be taught well and understandingly. But it certainly is not an indispensable study. If the question were, whether a child should be taught to read fluently and intelligently, and with such ease that reading should be a delightful recreation, for the rest of his life ; should learn so much of grammar and language as to be able always to express himself, in speech and writing, correctly and with facility ; so much of geography as to know what is most essential in the physical features and products, and the character and present condition of the inhabitants, of all important parts of the globe ; and so much of his own structure and economy as to be able to understand the laws of physical and mental health and happiness ; — or, omitting any one of these, or learning it very ill, should substitute therefor so much of history as is contained in any one small volume ; we suppose there are few, who, regarding the future comfort, usefulness, and welfare of the learner, would not say, without much hesitation, that the first four of these are of indispensable importance ; that the latter is very desirable, — but, if either is to be left out, it must be the study of history. Wisely, therefore, have School Committees here and elsewhere acted, in requiring the first three studies to be introduced into the schools in the order in which they are here set down ; and wisely, we think, will they act hereafter, if they require the study of physiology to take precedence of all others except these indispensable three.

“ The early periods of instruction should be employed in cultivating the powers of the mind as extensively as possible, and, while so doing, in getting materials for the common and universal action of the mind. Those facts should be learnt first which are most *essential* to the physical, mental, and moral well-being of the individual. A woman might be an excellent mother of a family, and yet know nothing at all about the causes of the

French or the American Revolution. She could not, except by accident, bring up her children with healthy minds and bodies, unless she were acquainted with the importance of pure air and a wholesome diet, and the indispensable necessity of good physical and moral habits. The mother of the Davidsons might have been fully acquainted with all the histories ever written, and yet her children might have perished as they did. But those daughters might have been now alive to be ornaments and blessings to society, if the mother had been acquainted with that simple law of physiology which forbids premature and excessive exercise of the mental faculties." — pp. 15, 16.

There is much practical sense in these few sentences : —

"Every thing connected with the school-house has an effect upon the mind and character of the children. Its beauty elevates and improves their taste. Its convenient arrangement fosters in them the principle and the love of order. Its ample space, well ventilated, gives a healthful play to their lungs. Its costliness naturally tends to make them value the opportunities they enjoy, and to look with greater respect upon the man who has the control of so noble an establishment, and with a warmer feeling of patriotism towards the city and State by which such liberal accommodations are made for their convenience and improvement. These circumstances tend to form an honest pride ; they contribute towards the building up of a high character and a lofty standard of action." — pp. 35, 36.

From the essay on Moral Instruction we copy a most pregnant passage.

"In the schools for citizens, the duties of citizens should be taught. There are certain points which ought to be presented to the minds of children, and that forcibly and frequently, not only by the life and example, but in the language of their teachers. Those great primary duties enumerated in the statute must not be neglected. The infinite value of a love of truth, of justice, of integrity, of fidelity in contracts, of industry, of personal purity, of charitableness in judgment, should be pointed out, and earnestly inculcated. The reciprocal relations and duties of parents and children, of employers and employed, of masters and servants, of buyers and sellers, should be explained and enforced. The duty of self-control, of self-education, of improving all one's faculties, of economy in the use of time ; the beauty of generosity, of kindness and courtesy, and of an honorable and manly character ; the value of diligence and of knowledge ; the excellence of good habits and the danger of bad

ones ; the shamefulness of foul, indecent, and profane language ; the cowardliness of deception, and the baseness of imposing upon the weak and the simple, — all these things should be taught in every good school. But in public schools, like ours, which bring together children, many of whom never receive, elsewhere, moral instruction, even of the lowest kind, the consequences and the punishments of pilfering, of false witness, of false swearing, and of the other violations of the laws of God and of the land, ought to be pointed out with terrible distinctness.” — pp. 39, 40.

We close our extracts with the following paragraphs from the same portion of the document.

“ In looking over the studies now pursued, with reference to the question, Are they the best which we could devise as preparatory for the business of life ? — it must be admitted that there are some important exceptions. The study of physiology ought to be introduced, especially into the girls’ schools, and the practice of drawing and the study of geometry, into those for boys.

“ Education, such as that of our common schools, the education of the whole community, should do what can be done to qualify children, first and particularly, for those labors and duties which are most important and universal. The inmates of the girls’ schools are destined to have charge of the nurture and rearing of the coming generation. To them will be committed the care of the bodies, the minds, and the character, at the most impressible period of life, when the body is formed to vigor and health, the mind to action, and the character to energy and virtue, or to effeminacy and vice. They are destined to be, to the race, guardians in health, and nurses in sickness. In the schools, therefore, something should be done to qualify them for these offices. There are laws of the structure of their own bodies, which the Maker of those bodies has established ; laws of nature, laws of life and health, which the Author of nature has made. These laws are not numerous, nor difficult to be understood. They have that admirable simplicity which marks their authorship ; but they are unspeakably important. These laws children, especially girls, should learn. They should learn the properties of the air they breathe, and the necessity of its abundance and purity ; the influences of cold and of heat, of light and of darkness ; the vital importance of well-ventilated rooms, of cleanliness, of warm clothing, of wholesome food and a healthy digestion, of temperance both in food and drink, of moderation in labor and in study, and of regular physical habits, and the

dangers of all excess. They should learn enough of the structure of their own body, and the influences of external nature which act upon it, to be led to perceive, in after years, when they come to reflect, the infinite consonance between the commandments which have been revealed to them, and the laws of the world which has been made for them ; that they may not be left to doubt whether either the one or the other are fortuitous or fantastical, the offspring of a blind chance or of an unfeeling necessity." — pp. 42, 43.

The report on the Writing Schools is also an able and important document ; but we have no space for any further comment.

ART. X. — *Poems*. By JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL. Second Series. Cambridge: George Nichols. 1848. 12mo. pp. 184.

IF poets are often misjudged, or have tardy and imperfect justice done to their merits, it is too frequently their own fault. They are usually the spoilt children of the world, in turn petted and humored with lavish fondness, till they become wayward and quarrelsome, and are then whipped and shut up in a dark closet till they can learn more discretion and better manners. They are often self-willed and perverse ; they offend the tastes and shock the prejudices of the age in which they live, and then complain that the age does not appreciate them, and that genius does not receive its due. They have a standing quarrel with their contemporaries, whom they accuse of plotting against their fame, and of entering into a conspiracy to neglect them. The injudicious admiration of a few blind followers consoles them for this fancied injustice ; they learn from these to affect a lofty contempt for the verdict of the present age, though a little while ago they were coveting it, or protesting with great energy against its unfairness, and they now, with dignified composure, look for their meed to posterity. But the appeal is not always successful ; posterity is not often at leisure to build the tombs of the prophets, or to write flattering epitaphs upon them, as it has to sit in judgment upon the obtrusive claims